

Obituary

Dr. Jacques Forestier



On the 16 March, 1978 Jacques Forestier died at the age of 88.

He may be considered as the last of the great Spa Physicians and the first of the Rheumatologists.

In the early 'thirties I made a pilgrimage to Aix-les-Bains to see Jacques and his father who were the first to use gold for rheumatoid arthritis, then thought to have some connection with the tubercle bacillus. Since then I met him in many parts of the world at conferences and symposia and at his home at Aix. He was always courteous and kind, never arrogant, dominating nor loquacious, but quietly contributing a breath of fresh air and clinical common sense to an often muddled debate.

He was a great gentleman, a wise physician, with both clinical and scientific ability and unbounded energy which he passed on to others with an encouraging smile.

Born in Aix-les-Bains in 1890 of a medical family, he distinguished himself in the 1914-18 war with quite outstanding bravery as the result of which he became a Commander of the Legion of Honour and received the Croix de Guerre with a number of bars and the Order of Merit.

In the sporting world he became a national figure, in rugby as an international player and in skiing and swimming, taking part in the Olympics in 1921 and being re-recognised in 1977 with a gold medal for his past contribution to sport.

Working with Sicard he pioneered radiodiagnosis in neurology with the discovery of the use of lipiodol in 1926 and he initiated aurotherapy in 1929. He did much to accomplish team work in rheumatology, working closely with the orthopaedists. He made many contributions to our knowledge of rheumatology, especially perhaps in spondylitis.

He was a founder member of the *Ligue contre le Rhumatisme* and became European President. He was given an Honorary Doctorate at the University of Geneva and became a member of the Academy of Medicine and an Honorary Member of the Heberden Society.

He leaves 7 children, one, François, continuing his work at Aix, and a loveable wife who was always at his side giving him quiet support and assistance and to whom we extend our most sincere sympathy. The world has lost a wonderful man.

G. D. KERSLEY